

## Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MNUC

SUBJECT: NPG CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER 13 ON REDUCED BLAST/  
ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS

FOLLOWING REPORT OF SEPT 13 NPG CONSULTATION HAS  
BEEN CLEARED BY ASST SECDEF MCGIFFERT DELEGATION (INCLUDING  
SIENA FOR DOD/ISA, GOMPERT FOR PM AND LEDOGAR FOR  
EUR/RPM). PLEASE ADD FINAL PARAGRAPHS AND TRANSMIT  
NIACT IMMEDIATE TO USUAL WASHINGTON ADDRESSEES INCLUDING  
JCS, NCS AND USNMR SHAPE. YOU ALSO AUTHORIZED TRANSMIT  
LATERALLY TO NATO POSTS.

BEGIN TEXT.

SUMMARY

JOINT STATE/DEFENSE/NSC TEAM MET SEPT 13 TO CONSULT  
ON QUESTION OF ER WEAPONS. TEAM LEADER ASD/ISA MCGIFFERT  
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EMPHASIZED THE PRESIDENT'S DESIRE TO RECEIVE ALLIED  
VIEWS PRIOR TO DECISION ON PRODUCTION OR DEPLOYMENT  
AND REVIEWED VARIETY OF CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED. WHILE  
NO ALLIED REPRESENTATIVE WAS IN POSITION TO GIVE  
DEFINITIVE REACTION OF HIS GOVERNMENT, TENOR OF  
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS WAS EITHER LEANING IN FAVOR OF

ER DEPLOYMENT OR INDICATIVE OF OPENMINDEDNESS. NO  
REPRESENTATIVE EXPRESSED OUTRIGHT OPPOSITION. RECURRING  
QUESTIONS RELATED TO WHETHER DEPLOYING ER WEAPONS WOULD

AFFECT A) THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD, B) SALT AND MBFR, C) THE NUCLEAR/CONVENTIONAL DISTINCTION, AND D) SOVIET DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF ER WEAPONS. WHILE ASKING A NUMBER OF PROBING QUESTIONS, FRG GAVE SIGNIFICANT PRELIMINARY ENDORSEMENT TO ER WEAPONS AS AUGMENTING DETERRENCE THROUGH INCREASED MILITARY CAPABILITY AND CITED NEED FOR BROAD SUPPORT FROM ALLIES FOR ANY DECISION TO DEPLOY. UK SUPPORTED FRG ANALYSIS NOTING UK "MOVING TOWARD" DECISION THAT ER WEAPONS MAY BE DESIRABLE ON POLITICAL AS WELL AS MILITARY GROUNDS. UK EXPRESSED HOPE NO REPEAT NO US DECISION WOULD BE TAKEN NOT REPEAT NOT TO PRODUCE ER WEAPONS WHILE ALLIES WERE IN THE ACTIVE PROCESS OF CONSIDERING THIS ISSUE. DUTCH REPRESENTATIVE RAISED SEVERAL QUESTIONS INCLUDING WHETHER ER WAS A "MININUKE" WHICH MIGHT BLUR THE NUCLEAR/CONVENTIONAL DISTINCTION. HE ALSO ASKED WHAT THE EFFECT WOULD BE ON DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS. DUTCH REP SUPPORTED THE CALL FOR UNCLASSIFIED MATERIAL ON ER TO PROMOTE INFORMED PUBLIC DEBATE IN AN EFFORT TO HELP DE-EMOTIONALIZE THE ISSUE. NORWAY AND DENMARK REITERATED THEIR STANDARD POSITIONS IN OPPOSITION TO STATIONING NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON THEIR TERRITORY BUT WERE OTHERWISE NONCOMMITTAL. ALLIES  
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EXPRESSED UNANIMOUS APPRECIATION AT BEING CONSULTED AND AGREED TO HAVE FURTHER NPG PERMREPS MEETING IN TIME FRAME SEPT 27-29 TO GIVE OFFICIAL REACTIONS OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS.

END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION BY SYG LUNS, WHO EMPHASIZED CURRENT ER DISCUSSIONS WERE BUT ONE ELEMENT OF TNF MODERNIZATION CONSULTATIONS, MCGIFFERT GAVE US PRESENTATION TO NPG PERMREPS (FULL TEXT SEPTTEL). IN THE TEXT, MCGIFFERT:

-- EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT DECIDED FOR OR AGAINST PRODUCTION PENDING ALLIED CONSULTATION;

-- STRESSED US DESIRE FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT FROM ALLIES WHATEVER THE DECISION;

-- NOTED THE FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN DEPLOYING ER WEAPONS INCLUDING:

A) INFLUENCE OF SUCH WEAPONS ON NATO'S MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS;

B) RELATIONSHIP OF ER TO OVERALL ALLIANCE STRATEGY;

C) EFFECT OF THESE WEAPONS ON THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD;

D) POSSIBLE SOVIET REACTIONS;

E) THE PUBLIC CONCERN WITH THESE WEAPONS.

-- REQUESTED EARLY ALLIED VIEWS, WHICH WOULD BE WEIGHED  
IN US DECISION.

2. FRG PERMREPS (PAULS) NOTED THAT ANY FINAL DECISION  
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ON ER WEAPONS' PRODUCTION WOULD BE A US PREROGATIVE.  
HE NOTED THAT GERMAN PUBLIC DEBATE HAD BEEN STRONGLY  
INFLUENCED BY EMOTIONAL TERMINOLOGY REFERRING TO  
"NEUTRON BOMBS" AND HAD NOT FOCUSED ON WHAT ER  
WEAPONS COULD MEAN FOR DETERRENCE. THE KEY QUESTION  
WAS WHETHER ER WEAPONS WOULD STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE  
AND THUS HELP PREVENT A WAR IN WHICH THEY MIGHT HAVE  
TO BE USED.

PAULS SUGGESTED THAT BECAUSE ER WEAPONS REDUCE  
COLLATERAL DAMAGE AND ARE MORE EFFICIENT AGAINST  
MILITARY TARGETS THEY WILL INCREASE THE CREDIBILITY  
OF NUCLEAR EMPLOYMENT AND INCREASE AN AGGRESSOR'S  
RISKS. THIS WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE A CONTRIBUTION TO  
DETERRENCE. OVERALL, ER WEAPONS WILL STRENGTHEN  
NATO'S MILITARY POSTURE AND REDUCE THE POTENTIAL DANGER  
OF POLITICAL PRESSURE FROM THE EAST THROUGH MILITARY  
INTIMIDATION BY MEANS OF A BUILDUP OF WP  
FORCES.

PAULS NOTED THAT ER RAISED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS  
INCLUDING:

-- COULD SUCH WEAPONS CREATE A TREND TO REGIONALIZATION  
OF CONFLICT?

-- WOULD THEY CREATE A TENDENCY TO SEEK A NUCLEAR  
DECISION ON THE BATTLEFIELD?

-- WOULD ARMS CONTROL DISCUSSIONS BE INFLUENCED AND  
HOW?

-- WOULD IMPROVED NUCLEAR CAPABILITY LOWER THE  
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NUCLEAR THRESHOLD OR BLUR THE NUCLEAR/CONVENTIONAL  
BOUNDARY?

-- WOULD THE NATO AGREED PRINCIPLES OF CONSULTATION ON

NUCLEAR RELEASE BE AFFECTED?

-- WILL THE STRATEGIES OF FORWARD DEFENSE AND FLEXIBLE RESPONSE BE CHANGED?

-- COULD THE DEVELOPMENT OF ER WEAPONS LEAD TO DIMINUTION OF THE BADLY NEEDED EFFORT TO UPGRADE CONVENTIONAL DEFENSES?

USING HIS OWN QUESTIONS AS A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMENT, PAULS PROVIDED "TEMPORARY ASSESSMENTS" OF FRG STRATEGIC THOUGHT AND NUCLEAR EMPLOYMENT CONCEPTS. THE FRG BELIEVES THAT TNF AND STRATEGIC FORCES SHOULD BE ADJUSTED TO THE THREAT AND CAREFULLY MODERNIZED. IN THIS PROCESS, THE BORDERLINE BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHOULD NOT BE AFFECTED AND WILL ALWAYS BE OF THE HIGHEST SIGNIFICANCE. ANY DECISION TO EMPLOY NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHOULD BE A POLITICAL ONE AND ASSURE CONSULTATION WITH THOSE COUNTRIES ESPECIALLY CONCERNED. THE IMPRESSION SHOULD NOT BE CIRCULATED THAT THE ALLIANCE CONCEIVES OF ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN STRICTLY BATTLEFIELD TERMS.

RISKS OF ESCALATION HOWEVER SHOULD NOT BE BORNE SOLELY BY THE VICTIMS OF AGGRESSION. THE SOVIET UNION SHOULD BE CLEARLY INFORMED THAT THERE CAN BE NO SANCTUARIES.

ALLIANCE CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE EFFORTS SHOULD NOT FALTER. CONVENTIONAL FORCES MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH TO ASSURE THAT ANY ALLIANCE RECOURSE TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS A CONSEQUENCE OF ITS POLITICAL WILL AND NOT FROM THE URGENCY OF ATTRITION OF CONVEN-  
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TIONAL FORCES.

MOREOVER PLANS FOR TNF MODERNIZATION SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED SEPARATELY FROM ARMS CONTROL/DETENTE EFFORTS. IN PARTICULAR, EASTERN PROPAGANDA SHOULD NOT INFLUENCE ALLIANCE DECISIONS TO STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE AND MAINTAIN THE BALANCE OF FORCES. THE EAST SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO THINK THAT ITS PROPAGANDA IS "SITTING AROUND THE TABLE WITH US" DURING ALLIANCE DECISION MAKING.

PAULS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE FRG ATTACHES TO THE US REAFFIRMATION OF THE BASIC POLICIES OF FORWARD DEFENSE AND FLEXIBLE RESPONSE AS NOTED IN PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO ATA IN REYKJAVIK, AND SEC'Y BROWN'S LETTER TO DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER. PAULS SAID THESE STATEMENTS HAD BEEN "VERY HELPFUL" IN ENDING PUBLIC SPECULATION ON THE STRATEGY OF THE

ALLIANCE.

CITING THE PECULIAR GEOGRAPHIC SITUATION OF THE FRG AND THE PRESENCE OF ALLIED FORCES ON ITS TERRITORY, PAULS NOTED THAT ALL ALLIES HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SURVIVABILITY OF NATO'S MILITARY FORCES -- TO INCLUDE THAT THEY BE EQUIPPED WITH THE BEST, MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPONS SYSTEMS AVAILABLE. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE RISKS OF THE ALLIANCE, JUST AS THE BENEFITS, SHOULD BE BORNE BY ALL AND NOT JUST BY THE POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF EASTERN AGGRESSION.

FINALLY THE ALLIANCE SHARES A COMMON RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS SURVIVABILITY AND COHESION. ER WEAPONS CONCERN THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE AND EMBODY THE PRINCIPLE OF NUCLEAR PARTICIPATION BY ALL  
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NATO MEMBERS. IN CONCLUSION, PAULS STRESSED THAT ANY INTRODUCTION OF NEW WEAPONS SHOULD BE DECIDED UPON WITH THE WIDEST POSSIBLE BASIS OF ALLIANCE AGREEMENT.

3. SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS KILLICK (UK) RECALLED THE AUTUMN 1976 LONDON NPG DECISION BY MINISTERS THAT DEVELOPMENT OF WEAPONS HAVING LESS COLLATERAL DAMAGE WAS TO THE BENEFIT OF THE ALLIANCE. HE NOTED THAT THE UK HAD NOT REACHED A FINAL DECISION ON ER WEAPONS BUT WAS MOVING TOWARD THE VIEW THEY MAY WELL BE DESIRABLE ON POLITICAL AND MILITARY GROUNDS.

A) KILLICK NOTED THAT THE US PAPER ON ER WEAPONS ANSWERED A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC UK QUESTIONS AND THAT THE LARGER CONCERNS, E.G., THEIR INFLUENCE ON ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS, IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD, AND QUALITATIVE ASPECTS OF THE ER CONCEPT WERE STILL UNDER DISCUSSION.

B) KILLICK SAW PARTICULAR NEED TO COORDINATE ALLIANCE RESPONSE TO THE FORTHCOMING US DECISION TO PREVENT ANY INTIMATION OF ALLIANCE DISCORD. HE SOUGHT ASSURANCE THAT WHILE ACTIVE DISCUSSION PROCEEDED IN NATO THERE WOULD NOT BE A NEGATIVE DECISION BY THE US ON ER PRODUCTION.

4. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, KILLICK HYPOTHESIZED THAT THE SOVIET-LED PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST ER WEAPONS WAS MORE THAN REACTION TO A "TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY". THE ANALOGY BETWEEN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST ER WEAPONS AND THAT AGAINST THE CRUISE MISSILE MAY INDICATE SOVIET FEAR THAT ER WOULD GIVE NATO MILITARY ADVANTAGES NOT IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE TO THE WP. INDEED A CTB COULD LIMIT THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND PERHAPS PREVENT EFFECTIVE ER DEVELOPMENT BY THE SOVIETS.

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A) KILLICK ALSO NOTED THE ER PUBLIC DEBATE HAD RECENTLY REGAINED A SENSE OF PROPORTION. IT IS NOW BECOMING CLEARER THAT ER IS NOT A NEW CLASS OF WEAPONS BUT A REFINEMENT OF EXISTING SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD OFFER THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN "ARMED FORCES ENGAGED IN AGGRESSION AND INNOCENT BYSTANDERS."

B) KILLICK ADDED HE BELIEVED A US PRODUCTION DECISION NEED NOT AWAIT DETAILED DEPLOYMENT CONSULTATIONS WITH ALLIES BUT COULD PROCEED ONCE A "SUFFICIENT BASIS" OF AGREEMENT HAD BEEN OBTAINED.

C) KILLICK CLOSED BY PRAISING THE US WORKING PAPER ON ER NOT ONLY FOR THE CURRENT CONSULTATION BUT AS A FORETASTE OF THE US PRESENTATION ON TNF MODERNIZATION TO BE PRESENTED TO THE NPG PERMREPS FOR DISCUSSION PRIOR TO THE OCTOBER NPG MINISTERIAL. HE URGED THE US TO CIRCULATE THE PAPER SOON TO ALLOW ADEQUATE TIME FOR THE ALLIES TO STUDY IT.

5. LUNS AGREED WITH KILLICK ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC OPINION. HE THOUGHT THE PHRASE QTE ENHANCED RADIATION UNQTE HAD BEEN USED AGAINST THE WEST AND THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO MOVE TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE TERM LIKE QTE REDUCED BLAST UNQTE. HE NOTED THAT THE TERM QTE NEUTRON BOMB UNQTE HAD NEVER BEEN USED BY THE USG PUBLICLY OR IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ALLIES.

6. SVART (DENMARK) EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE US INITIATIVE TO CONSULT. HE SAID THAT SUCCESSIVE DANISH GOVERNMENTS HAVE CONSISTENTLY ADHERED TO A POLICY OF NOT SECRET

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PERMITTING THE STATIONING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON DANISH TERRITORY. THIS POLICY WOULD APPLY TO ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS. HE AGREED THAT THE DECISION ON PRODUCTION WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE US BUT NOTED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES ATTRIBUTED THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO THE QUESTION. THEY BELIEVED THE DECISION SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT NOT ONLY OF MILITARY CHARACTERISTICS BUT ALSO EFFECTS ON DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT, ALL OF WHICH SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO SEARCHING AND THOUGHTFUL INVESTIGATION WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. HE CITED THE EFFECTS OF THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS ON THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD AND ON DETERRENCE AS QUESTIONS WARRANTING THOROUGH CONSIDERATION. HE ASKED

WHETHER IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO DECIDE NOW ON PRODUCTION, OR WHETHER THE PROSPECTS OF SUCH A DECISION COULD BE USED MORE EFFECTIVELY AS A BARGAINING CHIP IN SALT AND MBFR. HE ASKED ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS ON CTB NEGOTIATIONS. FINALLY, HE WONDERED IF ER WEAPONS WOULD RESULT IN AN INCREASE IN THE ARMS RACE, CONCLUDING THAT THE APPEARANCE OF THESE WEAPONS HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRESS IN DISARMAMENT TALKS SO THAT ATTENTION COULD FOCUS ON REDUCTIONS AND NOT NEW WEAPONS.

7. GUNDERSEN (CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE) OFFERED VIEWS WHICH HE SAID WERE PERSONAL, SINCE THE MILITARY COMMITTEE HAD NOT FORMALLY ADDRESSED ER WEAPONS. HE SAID MILITARY AUTHORITIES RECOGNIZE THAT ANY USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WOULD REPRESENT A MARKED QUALITATIVE CHANGE IN WARFARE AND WOULD ALWAYS BE A POLITICAL ACT. IN THIS SENSE THE SAME POLITICAL CONTROLS WOULD APPLY TO ER WEAPONS AS TO ANY NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IN HIS VIEW, ER WEAPONS WOULD IMPROVE NATO'S WAR FIGHTING CAPABILITY AND THEREBY ENHANCE DETERRENCE. HE SAID THESE WEAPONS WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE PRIMARY WARSAW PACT THREAT CONSISTING OF MASSIVE ARMORED THRUSTS AND SECOND ECHELON REINFORCEMENTS. THE PRESENCE OF SUCH WEAPONS WOULD  
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INCREASE MILITARY FLEXIBILITY AND NATO'S RANGE OF OPTIONS WHICH COULD ONLY HELP TO DETER THE WP. THE POTENTIAL FOR

REDUCED COLLATERAL DAMAGE WOULD BE AN ADDITIONAL BENEFIT. ZEINER GUNDERSEN DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ER WEAPONS WOULD INFLUENCE THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD. HE CONCLUDED THAT THERE WERE STRONG MILITARY ARGUMENTS FOR ER WEAPONS RESULTING FROM INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS WHICH IN TURN LEAD TO STRENGTHENED DETERRENCE. HE AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE AND DESIRABLE TO INCLUDE THE PHRASE QTE REDUCED BLAST UNQTE IN DISCUSSING THESE WEAPONS.

8. NORWEGIAN REP SAID THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE DEBATE IN NORWAY WHICH HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT ONE-SIDED, IN PART AS A RESULT OF US PRESS TREATMENT. HE SAID THAT ON THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE, THE GON FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO TAKE A POSITION AND INDEED HAD NOT YET DONE SO. HE SAID THAT IN LIGHT OF GON POLICY REFUSING THE STATIONING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON ITS SOIL, THE DEPLOYMENT OF ER WEAPONS IN NORWAY WAS NOT POSSIBLE, BUT HE THOUGHT THE ISSUE WAS OF GENERAL INTEREST TO THE ALLIANCE. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION THAT THERE WOULD BE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS, AND CITED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WHICH HIS AUTHORITIES BELIEVED SHOULD BE CONSIDERED:

-- WILL ER WEAPONS ADD TO DETERRENT?

-- WOULD THE CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS BE MAINTAINED?

-- DO THESE WEAPONS RAISE OR LOWER THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD?

-- WOULD THERE BE A REDUCTION OR INCREASE IN PREEMPTIVE  
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STRIKE POSSIBILITIES?

-- WOULD COLLATERAL DAMAGE BE REDUCED?

-- WOULD POSITIVE POLITICAL CONTROL ON EMPLOYMENT AND  
RELEASE BE AFFECTED?

-- WHAT IS THE ARMS CONTROL IMPACT, INCLUDING ON THE  
CLIMATE SURROUNDING SALT, MBFR AND CTB?

9. CATALANO (ITALY) JOINED OTHERS IN THANKING THE US FOR INITIATING CONSULTATIONS. HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NOT COMPLETED A DEFINITE ASSESSMENT BUT WOULD STUDY THE INFORMATION CIRCULATED BY THE US AND THE VIEWS OF OTHER ALLIES. HE CITED THE NEED TO TAKE CAREFUL ACCOUNT OF IMPLICATIONS FOR MBFR, INCLUDING OPTION III. NOTING THE STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE HE ASKED WHETHER THE MILITARY COMMITTEE COULD PROVIDE A CONSIDERED AND OFFICIAL VIEW BEFORE THE NEXT

CONSULTATIONS. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO INVOLVE THE DPC IN THE ALLIANCE DECISION PROCESS.

10. BUWALDA (NETHERLANDS) DELIVERED THE STATEMENT WHICH THE DUTCH DELEGATION HAD PASSED TO THE MISSION ON SEPTEMBER 9 (USNATO 08637). HE EMPHASIZED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO REACH FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND THEREFORE WELCOMED A FURTHER CONSULTATION. HE SAID HIS AUTHORITIES NEEDED TO GIVE FURTHER EXPLANATIONS TO PARLIAMENT AND THE PUBLIC AND HE SUPPORTED THE UK REQUEST FOR UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

11. HARDY (CANADA) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES WELCOMED THE NPG MEETING AS A BEGINNING OF CONSULTATIONS. HE SAID OTTAWA HAD ONLY BEGUN TO WEIGH THE ISSUE AND REQUIRED ADDITIONAL  
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INFORMATION AS WELL AS THE VIEWS OF OTHER ALLIES. HE SAID HIS AUTHORITIES AGREED IN GENERAL WITH THE ASSESSMENT IN THE US ARMS CONTROL IMPACT STATEMENT REGARDING THE



POSSIBLE MARGINAL NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ER ON ARMS CONTROL. HE SAID THAT MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVED THAT ER WEAPONS WOULD MAKE AGGRESSION LESS LIKELY, WHILE MAKING THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE EVENT OF AGGRESSION MORE PROBABLE. HE SAID HIS AUTHORITIES ASSUMED THAT CURRENT POLITICAL PROCEDURES WOULD APPLY TO ER WEAPONS AND THAT THEIR USE WOULD NOT BE VIEWED WITH ANY LESS DELIBERATION THAN OTHER NUCLEAR WEAPONS. HE ENDORSED THE UK SUGGESTION FOR THE NPG TO EXAMINE ER ISSUES AND TO DISCUSS THEM AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. HE NOTED A RECENT PRESS REPORT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD NOT DECIDE ON PRODUCTION BEFORE LATE SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER AND NOTED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TIMING OF FURTHER NATO CONSULTATIONS.

12. SCHUURMANS (BELGIUM) ALSO SAW TODAY'S NPG MEETING AS THE BEGINNING OF A PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS THAT WOULD BRING TO LIGHT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF ER WEAPONS. HE READ A LIST OF QUESTIONS THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WANTED TO EXAMINE WITH THE ALLIES WHICH PARALLELED QUESTIONS POSED BY PREVIOUS SPEAKERS (E.G., EFFECTS OF ER WEAPONS ON THE THRESHOLD, NATO STRATEGY, POLITICAL CONTROL, COLLATERAL DAMAGE, WHETHER THE WP HAS OR WILL DEVELOP ER WEAPONS, AND ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS).

13. MCGIFFERT RESPONDED TO THE MAIN BLOCKS OF QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE ALLIES WHICH WERE NOT OTHERWISE COVERED IN THE US PAPER CIRCULATED ON SEPTEMBER 12. CONCERNING THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD AND BLURRING OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS, HE SAID THAT ER WEAPONS WERE IN FACT VERY POWERFUL NUCLEAR DEVICES WHICH WOULD NOT  
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BE MISTAKEN FOR CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS. HE NOTED THERE WERE ALREADY WEAPONS IN THE STOCKPILE WITH LOWER RADII OF DESTRUCTION THAN PRESENTLY PLANNED ER WEAPONS. MCGIFFERT SAID THE ESSENTIAL PART OF THE DISTINCTION RELATES TO POLITICAL CONTROL. ER WEAPONS, IF DEPLOYED, WOULD BE SUBJECT TO EXACTLY THE SAME CONTROLS AS PRESENT

WEAPONS. OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE TO THE THRESHOLD IS THE STRENGTHENING OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES ON WHICH NATO IS WORKING HARD.

14. MCGIFFERT SAID THAT ER WEAPONS WOULD NOT CHANGE CURRENT NATO DOCTRINE OR STRATEGY.

15. CONCERNING SOVIET DEVELOPMENTS, MCGIFFERT SAID WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE SOVIETS HAVE ANY PLANS TO DEVELOP/ DEPLOY ER WEAPONS. HE SUGGESTED THAT IF THE SOVIETS DEPLOYED SUCH WEAPONS THE ADVANTAGE WOULD PROBABLY STILL BE ON THE NATO SIDE, AS LONG AS SOVIET PLANS WERE BASED ON MASSIVE ARMORED THRUSTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES.

HE SAID THIS WOULD HAVE AN IMPORTANT BEARING ON DETERRENCE.

16. GOMPERT (STATE REP ASSISTING MCGIFFERT) RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS ON THE EFFECTS OF ER WEAPONS ON ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS AND ATMOSPHERE. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO NECESSARY AND DIRECT LINKAGE OF THOSE WITH ER WEAPONS. WITH RESPECT TO CTB, HE SAID THAT SINCE WE CANNOT KNOW WHAT EFFECT ER WEAPONS WOULD HAVE ON SOVIET ER DECISIONS, WE CANNOT SAY WHAT EFFECTS THERE MIGHT BE ON CTB. HE SAID ER WEAPONS WOULD HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT QUANTITATIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR MBFR OPTION III AND THAT THE EFFECTS OF QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENT IN NATO TNF IN GENERAL COULD HAVE AMBIGUOUS, POSSIBLY OFFSETTING EFFECTS ON THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF OPTION III. WITH RESPECT TO THE CLIMATE FOR SALT, GOMPERT SAID SOVIET PROPAGANDA ABOUT ER WAS NOT HELPFUL.

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IT WAS TRUE THAT ER PRESENTED AN INVITING PROPAGANDA TARGET AND THAT SOVIET RHETORIC MIGHT REFLECT GENUINE CONCERN ABOUT THE SYSTEM. BUT ON BALANCE WE BELIEVE THAT WHENEVER THE SOVIETS CHOOSE TO INTENSIFY PROPAGANDA, THEY WILL FIND APPROPRIATE TARGETS -- IF NOT ER, THEN SOMETHING ELSE. AN ACTUAL US DECISION ONE WAY OR ANOTHER ON ER WEAPONS WOULD PROBABLY NOT AFFECT PROSPECTS IN SALT.

17. TURNING TO THE QUESTION OF TIMING, MCGIFFERT SAID HE BELIEVED THE PRESIDENT MAY NEED TO BE IN A POSITION TO MAKE A DECISION IN OCTOBER, SINCE NOT ONLY THE VIEWS OF ALLIES BUT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, SUCH AS CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS, PLAY A PART. FURTHER, HE THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO DE-EMOTIONALIZE THE ISSUE WHICH COULD BECOME MORE DIFFICULT WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME. HE DID NOT THINK THAT CONTINUING INCONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE IN THE NPG MINISTERIAL IN OCTOBER SEEMED JUSTIFIED AND IN FACT IT MIGHT APPEAR AS A POSTPONEMENT OF DEFINITIVE VIEWS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE US DID NOT MEAN TO FORECLOSE CONSIDERED VIEWS, BUT HE IMPRESSED UPON THE ALLIES THE NEED FOR THE PRESIDENT TO BE IN A POSITION TO REACH A DECISION IN THE NEAR FUTURE. MCGIFFERT ALSO SAID THE US DID NOT SEE A NEED FOR FORMAL PROCEDURES OR PAPERS IN NATO TO CONSIDER THIS ISSUE. HE SAID THE US WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT THERE HAD TO BE AN ALLIANCE-WIDE VIEW RECORDED IN A DOCUMENT. RATHER, THE US NEEDS A SENSE OF THE VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE SO THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO ADVISE THE PRESIDENT THAT THERE WILL BE SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FOR WHATEVER DECISION HE TAKES.

18. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS, PERMREPS AGREED WITH A PROPOSAL BY SYG LUNS TO HOLD A SECOND NPG DISCUS-

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SION IN FINAL DAYS OF SEPTEMBER AT WHICH NATIONS WOULD  
PRESENT THEIR CONSIDERED VIEWS.

19. SYG LUNS THEN PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING TEXT OF A PRESS  
RELEASE ON THE SEPTEMBER 13 MEETING, WHICH PERMREPS  
APPROVED. BEGIN TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE:

A MEETING OF THE NATO NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP TOOK PLACE  
WITH A DELEGATION FROM THE US IN ATTENDANCE TO DISCUSS  
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS,  
INCLUDING ENHANCED RADIATION/REDUCED BLAST WEAPONS.  
MEMBERS OF THE NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP HAD THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO QUESTION THE MEMBERS OF THE US DELEGATION AND TO  
EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON THESE ISSUES. END TEXT.

VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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